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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of embedding auxiliary data (XD) in an information signal (MP), comprising the step of modifying selected signal samples so as to represent respective symbols of said auxiliary data, characterized in that said signal samples are transform coefficients $(c(i,j))$ obtained by transform coding the information signal and encoded into variable-length code words, the method further comprising the steps of:

- decoding a variable-length code word indicative of a selected coefficient;
- modifying said selected coefficient so as to represent an auxiliary data symbol ~~not transform-coded~~;
- encoding the modified coefficient into a new variable-length code word; and
- replacing the old code word by the new code word;
- wherein said step of replacing the old code word by a new code word is omitted if said replacing causes the length of a given sequence of code words to substantially exceed the original length of said sequence.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, further including a step of inserting dummy bits in a field provided by the format according to which the signal has been coded, if said replacing causes the length of a given sequence of code words to substantially fall short of the length of the original sequence.

4. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the auxiliary data includes data words each represented by plural combinations of data symbols.

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5. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said given sequence is a slice of an MPEG video signal.

6. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said given sequence is a transport packet of an MPEG transport stream.

7. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said given sequence is the sequence of code words between clock reference time stamps which are accommodated in the signal.

8. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the selected coefficient is a differential DC coefficient representing the difference between DC coefficients of successive blocks of coefficients.

9. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the step of modifying the selected coefficient comprises adding such a value that the sum of differential DC coefficients of a given series of blocks is not substantially modified.

10. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the series of blocks is a slice of an MPEG video signal.

11. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said data symbols are represented by modulo-n values of the selected coefficients, where n is a predetermined integer.

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12. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein
n=2.

13-15. (Cancelled).

16. (original) A method of recording an information
signal on a storage medium, comprising the steps of:

- receiving a compressed information signal having signal
samples in the form of transform coefficients obtained by
transform coding the information signal and encoded into
variable-length code words;
- embedding auxiliary data in said information signal, using a
method as claimed in claim 1;
- recording said information signal with embedded auxiliary
data on said storage medium.

17. (Currently Amended) An arrangement for embedding auxiliary
data in an information signal, comprising means for modifying
selected signal samples so as to represent respective symbols of
said auxiliary data, characterized in that said signal samples
are transform coefficients obtained by transform coding the
information signal and encoded into variable-length code words,
the arrangement further comprising:

- means for decoding a variable-length code word indicative of a
selected coefficient;
- means for modifying said selected coefficient so as to
represent an auxiliary data symbol ~~not transform coded~~;
- means for encoding the modified coefficient into a new
variable-length code word; and
- means for replacing the old code word by the new code word,
- wherein said step of replacing the old code word by a new
code word is omitted if said replacing causes the length of
a given sequence of code words to substantially exceed the
originallength of said sequence.

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18. (Cancelled).

19. (Original) An arrangement for recording an information signal on a storage medium, comprising:

- means for receiving a compressed information signal having signal samples in the form of transform coefficients obtained by transform coding the information signal and encoded into variable-length code words;
- means for embedding auxiliary data in said information signal, using an arrangement as claimed in claim 17;
- means for recording said information signal with embedded auxiliary data on said storage medium.

20-21. (cancelled).